

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed May 13, 2003 has been received and reviewed. Claims 1-19 are pending with claims 7-19 having been withdrawn subject to election. Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected over a cited reference. Claims 4 and 5 are objected to as being based on a rejected base claim.

Claims 1 and 2 are amended. The Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance for the reasons stated below.

Rejection Of Claims 1-3 And 6 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

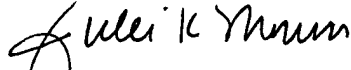
Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Heaton (GB 2 165 162). The Examiner states that Heaton discloses each of the claimed elements. Heaton discloses a stopcock device (41) which is embedded between two frame portions (33, 34) of a filter plate, the stopcock device having a ring (46) transversed by a pipe (48) which is movably alignable with a port (47) that extends through the two frame portions (33, 34) and, apparently, in alignment with a drainage port (39) that extends through the surround (frame) of a web (61). Claim 1, as amended, clarifies that the replaceable wear elements are positioned along at least one opposing recessed face of the filter plate. Support for the amendment of claim 1 is found at paragraphs 26 and 27 of the specification. Heaton provides no such teaching or structure. Therefore, amended claim 1 is not anticipated by Heaton. Claim 2 is amended consistent with the requirements of claim 1. Claims 2-6, being dependent upon claim 1, further distinguish over Heaton for the reasons stated with respect to claim 1. Therefore, claims 1-6 are not anticipated.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and the arguments presented herein, the Applicant submits that claims 1-6 present patentable subject matter. Reconsideration and

allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments: Replacement FIGS. 4 and 7